

St Francis Borja SJ

Today is Thursday the 3rd of October, the feast of St Francis Borgia SJ, in the 26th week of Ordinary Time.

The King's Singers sing Spem in Alium by Thomas Tallis. ?I have never put my hope in any other but in you?. As I begin this time of prayer today, can I speak those words to God? Can I place all my hope, all my trust, all my faith in him?

Today's reading is from the Gospel of Luke.

At the end of chapter 9 of Luke's Gospel, the journey to Jerusalem begins and the gospel of Luke moves into a new key: we are to travel this journey together, Christ, the disciples, the evangelist and we the readers. The sending out of the 70 is of special importance ? they are the first expression of something that Luke sees as essential to the life of the Christian community: the missionary spirit.

There is an encouragement here from Jesus to place our trust only in him as we work for the kingdom of God. To spread God's kingdom, Jesus chooses to depend on the various gifts we have been given. He sends us out just as we are. We carry little except our limited strengths and our frailties. Yet Jesus did not send out the disciples alone but in pairs, for mutual support. We lean on one another and on the community of faith.

The disciples are charged to proclaim Jesus' own message: ?The kingdom of God has come near to you.? The mission is to be characterised by urgency and detachment. But as you listen to the reading again, notice that it is not the disciples who initiate the mission. The initiation comes from the Lord of the harvest. It is Christ's mission and message, not ours.

As this time of prayer draws to a close, perhaps I might reflect on the words: ?The kingdom of God has come near to you.? Am I receptive to God's word spoken to my heart each day? Who helps me to become a true hearer of the Word? Lord strengthen me in my resolve to be a peace bearer and for the grace I need when I meet opposition.